23: Franck--299 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 293, 301, 644

"The king's wives, and the girls of the royal family and of the wealthier class, wear a kind of swimming-vest, usually white, in addition to the brilliant scarf. Perhaps his Majesty does not wish charms meant for his own eyes alone to become even visually common property. Yet the royal wives themselves on the way to market had about them a hint of coquetry, even toward a foreigner, which seemed to be totally lacking among their sisters of the bush. Many of the girls of Luang Prabang wear enormous silver or pewter anklets, some of them weighing twenty piastres or more. Others wore chains of ten-cent pieces. So many French silver piastres have been turned into these anklets, bracelets, the metal collars of the Miao, and other forms of adornment that it is little wonder Indo-China now uses almost exclusively paper money."

25: Brodrick--106 [2] S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians
116, 276, 293

"There stroll by the Laotian girls, lazily self-possessed and free-seeming, and, if it is a feast day, gaudy with satin and velvet and gold and silver thread and innumerable bangles and necklaces. Slung over their shoulders is not only the yellow scarf but the black and gold lacquer nécessaire containing the betel-chewing outfit--scissors, lime-pot, nuts and tube for the wax you smear on your lips so they may not be seared with the astringent juice."

149: Reinach--134 G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

"Costume. The Laotian costume is the langouti or Siamese sampot. This is a long band of cloth without any seams, and between one and 1.2 meters wide by 2.5 to three meters long. The cloth is placed around the waist to make a skirt, with the opening in front. To keep the skirt in place a knot is made in front with part of the surplus cloth, and the loose ends of the cloth left hanging in front are rolled, passed between the legs and attached to the belt in the middle of the back. The skirt then takes the form of a pair of baggy trousers covering the front of the legs down to the knees and leaving the lower part of the thighs bare in back. The chest is left bare, and a sash is tied around the waist. This is the ordinary garment, and that worn by all the common people. The sash is often worn on the shoulder or around the chest, but it has to be removed and wound around the loins whenever one speaks to anyone who has a right to one's respect. Dandies wear shoes, stockings or socks, quite frequently a short-sleeved or sleeveless knitted vest, a jacket made of white cotton or flannel, depending on the season, and a hat of any type whatever, or even a cap. But these are imported European styles which have not become widespread. Umbrellas enjoy great favor." (Le Laos Français.)

This costume is a relatively recent import, for two hundred years or so ago the Laotians on the banks of the river, as those of the interior still do today, wore a fairly long jacket [178] made of cotton cloth woven in the land. The jacket was caught in at the waist by a sash and came down over a broad pair of trousers made of the same material. The whole garment was dark blue or almost black in color. On the head they wore a kind of turban made of silk or cotton of the same color.

The abandonment of this purely Thai costume was due to the influence of the Siamese and Cambodians during their incursions into Laos. It was also at this time that the Laotians formed the habit of cutting their hair, which they had previously worn rolled in a coil on the back of the head.

"Laotian women wear a skirt which covers them from the hips to the ankles and is made of silk interwoven with gold threads. These skirts are rather dark in color, and the pattern is made up of vertical stripes which are close together and difficult to see. In Luang-Prabang the lower part of the garment is decorated with a flat trimming formed of two or three closely spaced gold galloons. At the top of the skirt a sash made of red cloth and embroidered to a greater

291 cover their bust with a small short jacket which is very close-fitting and bright in color. It has a heart-shaped opening on the chest and, like the men's jacket, is ornamented with galloons and passementerie. For celebrations and ceremonies Lu women wear a heavy turban on their head which is folded flat or pleated, shaped like a mitre and generally made of black silk spangled with gold.

301 Both men and women pierce the lobes of their ears [246] with a broad opening, into which they introduce hollow gold or silver cylinders which are sometimes as large as three centimeters in diameter.

306 Great lovers of jewelry, the Lus number skilled jewelers and goldsmiths among them who make hair coil plaques, ear cylinders, flat braided metal belts with wide chased and checkered buckles, bracelets, rings, hilts and sheaths for daggers and swords, etc. [Illustration alongside text here]

411 The Lus almost always wear daggers and swords. Each of them, so to speak, possesses a rifle, generally flintlock, which by the shape of the stock, the length of the barrel and the many bands which adorn it greatly resembles the long Moukhala so dear to our Arabs in Algeria.

[361] Lu villages are clean, and the houses are arranged in a checkerboard pattern.

[231] The Lus have a high reputation as breeders of oxen and horses.

527 A great lover of celebrations and parades, this boisterous people sets off gunpowder at every opportunity, and there is no festival, private or public, so small that it is not accompanied by salvos and fireworks.

[77] From their contact with the Burmese the men have retained a [247] [Illustration] [248] [Blank page] [249] taste for dancing and for 535 sword fights mingled with dance steps in which they manifest a real grace and elegance.

"Among other forms of amusement, the men execute, with a truly remarkable suppleness and skill, sword dances which are perfectly elegant. Naked to the waist, with their trousers rolled up and bunched and a wooden sword in each hand whose cutting edge has been dipped in dye so that the thrusts will leave a mark, the two champions confront one another. Moulinets, parries and returns follow one another without apparent effort, and the movements are undulating and rapid but without any abruptness. The men seem to be caressing one another, not fighting, and yet the slashes leave their colored traces on the skin of the vanquished. Direct thrusts are forbidden, but the entire body from head to foot is fair game for the opponent. Thus during the